



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement of Response to UN Special Representative of the Secretary General for Abkhazia

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires Douglas A. Davidson
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
February 6, 2003

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I should like to join the Ambassador of Greece on behalf of the European Union and I'm sure my other colleagues in welcoming Ambassadors Tagliavini and Lacombe to the Permanent Council today. We are indeed privileged to have the current Special Representative of the Secretary General for Georgia as well as her two distinguished predecessors in the same room with us today. And I should like, in particular, to thank Ambassador Tagliavini for coming to Vienna to address us at this particularly busy time in her schedule.

As my colleague representing the European Union has already noted, the appearance today of Ambassadors Lacombe and Tagliavini is indeed a testament to the excellent cooperation between the United Nations and the OSCE on this particularly difficult issue. If I may, I should like to address myself to the remarks made by Ambassador Tagliavini first. Mr. Chairman, Ambassador Tagliavini is to be commended for her hard work and tireless commitment to resolving the difficult problem in Abkhazia, Georgia. The United States supports a cooperative and fully transparent international approach, in partnership with Georgia, to achieve a peaceful resolution to the conflict in Abkhazia that respects fully Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

We support the efforts of the United Nations to bring about such a resolution on the basis of the paper on "Basic Principles for the Distribution of Competencies Between Tbilisi and Sukhumi," which as Ambassador has earlier pointed out, has received the full endorsement of the Security Council. We wish Ambassador Tagliavini well in her continuing efforts in this regard.